

Recruiter Script & Instructions

“Good morning/afternoon, my name is _____. I’m working with the National Park Service on an important research study about scenic resources in parks. Today we’re asking a small number of visitors to help us by joining a focus group discussion this afternoon here in the visitor’s center. During the discussion we would ask you your opinions about materials we are developing for a visitor survey. It starts at 3:30 pm and would last for 90 minutes. We are offering [incentive] to thank you for participating.”

IF GROUP: *“Would one person from your group, age 18 or older be willing to help us by participating?”*

IF INDIVIDUAL: *“Would you be willing to help us by participating?”*

⇒IF YES: *“Great, thank you. Can you please tell me your age?”*

RECORD GENDER _____

RECORD AGE _____

“The discussion will start at 3:30pm and be held in the _____ room here in the visitor center. May I have a cell phone number so that I can contact you later to remind you about the session?”

RECORD PHONE # _____

⇒IF NO: *“Thank you for your time. Before you go, can I ask your home zip code?”*

RECORD ZIP _____

RECORD GROUP SIZE/COMPOSITION _____

“Enjoy your visit.”

Focus Group Discussion Guide

Moderator Introduction:

“Thank you for agreeing to participate in our focus group discussion this afternoon. My name is [moderator] and I’m working with a team of researchers on a study about scenic resources in national parks. We are currently in the process of designing a survey that will help park managers understand visitor perceptions of these resources. We will be conducting a series of focus groups to help us refine the questions that we will use in the survey. Today we are going to ask you to review some materials and answer a series of questions, and then discuss your impressions. Your responses and feedback will help us make sure the survey questions are clear and can be easily answered by other park visitors.

“You each have a copy of our discussion guide, a pencil, and some numbered sets of photographs. We will be walking through each page of the guide one at a time and pausing after each page to discuss your written responses to the questions and general reactions.”

“Finally, the Paperwork Reduction Act requires approval of all federal government surveys by the Office of Management and Budget. Details of this approval are described in the box at the bottom of the cover page of your discussion guide.”

“Are there any questions before we begin?”

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: The National Park Service is authorized by 54 U.S.C. 100070 to collect this information. This collection involves 8 focus group sessions. Information from the groups will be used to design a survey that will help park managers understand visitor perceptions of scenic resources. We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. Your response is not required to obtain or retain a benefit. OMB has approved this collection of information and assigned control number 1024-0224.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting for this collection of information is estimated to be about 90 minutes for to complete the session. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the Information Collection Officer, National Park Service, 12201 Sunrise Valley Dr. (MS-242), Reston, VA 20192.

Moderator:

"Please turn to the first page of the discussion guide, read the information provided and answer the question. Feel free to make notes about any questions or comments you have about the information on the page as well. Please pause when you are finished so we can discuss your reactions and responses."

Section 1 - Introduction

In this survey we will be discussing **scenic resources** in National Parks.

Scenic resources can include:

- Views and vistas
- Landforms and landscapes, such as mountains, valleys, plains and deserts
- Trees and vegetation
- Cultural and historical features or areas

- 1) What types of scenic resources did you experience during your current visit to [Park] today?

STOP. PLEASE DO NOT TURN PAGE UNTIL INSTRUCTED TO DO SO.

Moderator:

1. *"Is there anything about the definition of scenic resources that is unclear or confusing?"*
2. *"Are there other things that come to mind when we say scenic resources?"*
3. *"What did people write down for question 1?"*

"Please turn to the next page..."

Section 1 - Introduction (cont.)

Please take a look at the set of [three] numbered photographs that we handed out.

- 2) Do these look like areas that you visited here in the park? Which ones?
- 3) What aspects of the scenes in each photograph are appealing to you?
- 4) Are there any aspects of the scenes in each photograph that are unappealing?

STOP. PLEASE DO NOT TURN PAGE UNTIL INSTRUCTED TO DO SO.

Moderator:

1. *"For questions 3 and 4- which aspects and why?"*

"Please turn to the next page..."

Section 2 – Impacts to Scenic Resources

Occasionally, incidents or accidents occur that cause **impacts** to scenic resources.

These can include [Vary depending on Park]:

- Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) use in off-limits areas
- Removal of trees or vegetation in the park, or areas around the park's boundaries
- [Buildings, structures, or equipment that encroach on park property]

- 5) Did you notice any impacts to scenic resources on your visit to [Park]?
- 6) What about on any past visits to a National Park?
- 7) Are there other types of impacts to scenic resources you can think of that are not mentioned here?

STOP. PLEASE DO NOT TURN PAGE UNTIL INSTRUCTED TO DO SO.

Moderator:

1. "What did people write down for question 5? 6? 7?"

"Please turn to the next page..."

Section 2 – Impacts to Scenic Resources (cont.)

Please take a look at the [two] sets of [three] numbered photographs that we handed out.

These show examples of different impacts to scenic resources.

- 8) For each set please write down a brief description of the impacts you see. Then indicate how severe you think the impacts are by ranking the scenes in the photographs from least to most impacted.

Photo Set 1 Impacts: _____

	Photo Number
Least Impacted	
↓	
Most Impacted	

[Repeat exercise for second set of photographs]

STOP. PLEASE DO NOT TURN PAGE UNTIL INSTRUCTED TO DO SO.

Moderator:

1. "How did people describe the scenes in set 1, 2?"
2. "What about the ordering? What features of the scenes made them seem more or less impacted?"

"Please turn to the next page..."

SECTION 3: Reducing Scenic Impacts

The National Park Service is considering a new program to restore scenic resources that have been impacted in [Park].

It is estimated that there are about [X] sites in the park where scenic resources have been impacted.

Resource managers and other experts have designed plans that will return impacted areas to their original condition as quickly as possible, for example:

- [Description of ORV tracks restoration program]
- [Description of tree/vegetation removal restoration program]
- [3rd program type]
- [4th program type]

9) How important do you think a program to restore impacted scenic resources in [Park] is? (CIRCLE ONE NUMBER)

- 1 VERY IMPORTANT
- 2 SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT
- 3 NOT IMPORTANT

STOP. PLEASE DO NOT TURN PAGE UNTIL INSTRUCTED TO DO SO.

Moderator:

1. "Does implementing a program to restore scenic sites seem like an important thing to do? Why or why not?"
2. Program issues to consider- responsibility for incident, enforcement, natural recovery

"Please turn to the next page..."

SECTION 3: Reducing Scenic Impacts (cont.)

Conducting the restoration activities would require funds that are not currently in [Park]'s budget. To pay for the program, [Park] would establish a "special program fee." The fee would be collected when entering the park and apply to all adult visitors, including annual pass holders.

The exact fee amount would depend on what impacted sites are targeted by the program, but would range between **\$X and \$Y per visitor**.

10) How important do you think the cost of a scenic resource restoration program is to visitors when deciding what impacted sites to target? (CIRCLE ONE NUMBER)

- 1 VERY IMPORTANT
- 2 SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT
- 3 NOT IMPORTANT

STOP. PLEASE DO NOT TURN PAGE UNTIL INSTRUCTED TO DO SO.

Moderator:

- 1. *"What are people's reactions to this proposal for how a scenic restoration program might be paid for? Does the term special program fee make sense?"*
- 2. *"In your opinion, are there alternative ways the program could be funded?"*
- 3. *"How did people respond to question 10? Why?"*
- 4. *Other site attributes to consider- footprint, location, visitation?*

"Please turn to the next page..."

SECTION 4: Scenic Resource Restoration

In the following series of questions we are going to ask you your opinions about how priorities for restoring impacted sites at [Park] might be set.

For each question we will show you a different set of two photographs side by side.

→ Photo A on the left shows an impacted site.

→ Photo B on the right shows the same site after restoration has been conducted.

You will then be asked whether you would vote to implement a program that would restore the impacted site. Restoring the site would require a special visitor fee to fund the program.

So, in each case you will choose between leaving the impacted site as is or restoring the site and paying the specified visitor fee.

Your answers will be used to determine whether a scenic resource restoration program should be implemented, and what types of impacted sites the program should target.

STOP. PLEASE DO NOT TURN PAGE UNTIL INSTRUCTED TO DO SO.

Moderator:

1. *Please let us know if there is there anything about these instructions that is unclear or confusing?"*

"Please turn to the next page..."

Site 1, 2 and 3

11, 12, and 13) If you had to vote between implementing a scenic resource restoration program that would restore the site pictured in the photos for the Special Visitor Fee listed **or** leave the site as is without a special visitor fee, how would you vote? (CHECK ONE BOX)

Site Conditions	Photo A	Photo B
Special Visitor Fee	\$0	\$X
I would vote for....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

STOP. PLEASE DO NOT TURN PAGE UNTIL INSTRUCTED TO DO SO.

Moderator:

1. *"How many people chose to leave the site as is? Restore the site?"*
2. *"Let's go around and hear why you voted the way you did..."*

"Please turn to the next page..."

SECTION 5: Conclusion

We have just a couple final questions. Your responses will help us understand how you compare to other visitors we will be talking with in focus group discussions.

14) How many times have you visited a National Park in the last five years?

____ VISITS IN THE LAST YEAR

____ VISITS IN THE LAST 2 YEARS

____ VISITS IN THE LAST 5 YEARS

15) What is your home zip code?

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Moderator:

“That concludes our focus group discussion. We appreciate your time and feedback. Please note that NPS is considering various options for addressing the issues we discussed today, and our survey will help us understand how the public thinks about those options. The examples we discussed do not reflect a specific program that [Park] will be implementing. Thank you.”
